TRACER

McHENRY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AN ILLINOIS CORPORATION (not for profit)

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Volume IV - No. 1 Newsletter Summer, 1977

ANNUAL MEETING

Since only one quarter can bring such news, we thought out annual meeting deserved to be the lead story of this issue. Of course, many of you were there for the election of officers and the transaction of other business, for the interesting program and the pleasant social hour that followed. Sanford Walkup of Crystal Lake was chairman of the nominating committee which was made up of Nancy Fike of McHenry and Shuji Kimura of Crystal Lake. Their list of directors was accepted and for the coming year, the board will be made up of: Alice Bailey, of Hebron; Dorothy McEachren, Leta Clark, Alice Clark, Hamilton O. Hale, Jack W. Satorius, and Audrey Walgenbach of Woodstock; Nancy Fike of McHenry; Dorothy Northrop, Don L. Hildebrand of Union; Ruth Cripe, Robert W. Hansen, and Betty Oberg of Marengo; Ann Rademaker and Ramon Martin of Cary; Gwendolyn Danner, Thresile Mulvenna, Myrtle Pagles, Avis Pankonin, of Harvard; Shuji Kimura of Crystal Lake; Phyllis Koeppel, of Algonquin; Henry Marlowe, and W. Patrick Williams of Huntley; Wanda Todd of Richmond; and Chester I. Nelson of Elgin. This board later elected Mrs. McEachren, president; Mrs. Fike, vice president; Mrs. Northrop, 2nd vice president; Mrs. Cripe, treasurer; Mrs. Rademaker, recording and Miss Leta Clark, membership secretaries.

After the business portion of the meeting, a demonstration of spinning and carding by Dorothy Muench had been arranged by Director Betty Oberg. There were many questions and comments showing how much the program was enjoyed. The afternoon ended with a social period at which coffee, punch and cookies were served by a committee chaired by Director Thresile Mulvenna. This took place on the twelfth of June.

NEW MEMBERS

One of the steadiest signs of growth for any organization is a list of new members. Our most recent list includes; Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Koeppel & family of Algonquin; Mr. & Mrs. Frank Petzelt & family of Cary; Mr Howard W. Cairns, Mrs. Charles Dietrick, and Mr. & Mrs. Axel Lundstrom, all of McHenry; Mrs. Harold Buchert of Richmond; Mr. & Mrs. Floyd Wilmington and Valley Hi Nursing Home of Woodstock.

And any mention of new members must include a reminder to old members that if you have not yet paid your dues for 1977-78, they are past due. Please send them to: Miss Leta Clark, 8815 Route 120, Woodstock, 60098. According to the by-laws, if dues are not paid after six months, the delinquent member must be dropped.

VISITORS

For a museum that has had visiting days regularly scheduled for only a year, our guest book shows that we are attracting many guests, not only from out of county but also out of state and even out of country. A recent list shows visitors from 29 Palms, California; St. Petersburg, Florida; Pendleton, Indiana; Benton Harbor, Michigan; Ogden, Utah; Seattle, Washington; as well as Sidcup, England; and Salzgitter, West Germany.

If you haven't been here lately, maybe you should drop in some Sunday or Wednesday afternoon. More artifacts come in all the time. You might find something that would interest you as much as it did these folks from far away. A most interesting acquisition was a will drawn up in 1813, leaving the lady's belongings to her two daughters; she listed quilts, lukeenglases, pattecoates, and gonds, with details so there could be no mistake over which daughter was to receive which article. While the old time spelling brings smiles to our lips, the care and thought expended on the will bring tears to the eyes.

GIFTS AND RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS PLEAS

To explain the money amounts, the gifts from the townships, of which there have been a number, it is necessary to go back a little, and explain the hard work, for the Society, that our treasurer, Ruth Cripe, has been doing. In the spring she was appointed to investigate the information that museums were valid recipients of revenue sharing funds. When she called the Federal Revenue Sharing Office in Washington, D.C. she was told that the Society could ask all seventeen townships and the twenty-four cities and villages of the county to be included in the budget to receive funds from this Federal Revenus Sharing Fund, or any other funds that are avilable. She and Dorothy McEachren, our president, then sent out letters to the treasurers of the governmental units in our county. Some of them had been asked previously for help, and had included the museum in their budgets. Since the letters, several have made donations. When one reads in the papers the astonishing amount of money that does come into the county from the Federal Revenue Sharing - some of which the local units of government have been unable to use and have returned - a still larger share can be hoped for, another year. We do want the townships to know that every penny is appreciated and will be put to good use.

A much appreciated contribution of $500.00 was received from F.D. Miles of Crystal Lake, which we do not think has been previously publicly mentioned. Also, in reply to a letter from Dorothy McEachren, the IBM Corporation donated $500.00. The money from Mr. Miles was to be used to repair the piano on stage in Eckert Hall.

We think a very special thank you should go to one member of the board of directors. Ramona Martin, probably appalled at the estimate of the cost of repairing the Civil War flag, undertook to do it herself, and at the July board meeting had it ready to be placed on exhibition. When one thinks of the hours of work, that thank you should be enthusiastic. Dorothy McEachren lent a helping hand when needed.

PLEAS FOR MORE HELP

Our first plea for help is just that. An urgent plea from Alice Clark, as chairman of volunteers. Who says: I desperately need more help to staff the Museum on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons. If you can help, please call 338-1634, preferably in the morning or evening, as I am often outside during the day. This is the season for vacations, reunions, and even jury duty for some of our faithful staffers. Won't you please help out?

Do you keep your Tracers? Only the Civil War Flag, of the projects mentioned in the Spring Tracer is finished.

Among the items the museum would prize, and people may have but not think of donating, are: the big reels for telephone cable - the cable has been donated; High School year books for this decade; roller skates - sure there are none hanging in your attic?; articles for the school room, which is criticized as looking too modern, excepting for our teacher's dress and apron; an old earthen drinking fountain would be nice to display in that room.

A needed item, not necessarily an antique, would be a typing table and chair. And our last plea is for information. Can anyone tell us anything about the "Hanging Tree"? It has been mentioned by Charles and Helen Wright, and was supposed to have been located in the Rose Farm Area. A Mr. De Witt West had a picture, but he is now deceased and no one has any idea what has become of the picture.

OUR TRAVELERS

Three of our directors have written what they think we would all be interested in, in their vacations. The Tracer staff would like to thank them and to ask anyone else who has had an interesting trip to send a contribution for the next Tracer.

COLORADO HIGHLIGHTS

Having recently returned from a trip to Colorado, I could rave about the beautiful mountain scenery, the thrill of a hot-air balloon ride at the Del Norte Balloon Ranch, or the fun of a float trip on the Rio Grande. Instead, the purpose of this article is to pinpoint two spots of historical interest which our members might plan to visit on future vacations in Colorado.

For a glimpse of what life was like in 1870, a visit to the Healey House in Leadville, Col. is a must. While the furnishings of the house are interesting, it is the novel approach which makes it unique. Guests are advised before entering that the hostesses are pretending to actually be living back in 1870. The father of the household is off hunting, and the mother and daughters are down town shopping. This leaves three of the five school teachers who board there to greet visitors. They are dressed in neat floor length dark skirts with prim white blouses. The teachers have bedrooms on the second floor with a small drawingroom where they may discreetly entertain their gentlemen friends. All questions are answered with facts which would have been true back in 1870. When one of our group inadvertently expressed surprise that the large braided rug wasn't covered with plastic, the young lady feigned puzzlement, and said she wasn't familiar with anything like that. So it was a fun experience, and best of all, it was free. The Healey House is owned by the government.

The second spot to visit is the museum located in the county courthouse at Del Norte in southern Colorado. There are only two rooms, but the many attractively arranged artifacts range from an old fashioned mousetrap to the skeleton of a 14 year old Indian girl found in a local cave. There's a Hohner harmonica with five small trumpets which is supposed to sound like a pipe organ. (Do any of our members own such an instrument?) Each room is presided over by a hostess paid by the county. Unfortunately, the museum has to maintain hours similar to the courthouse, closing at four o'clock and open only on weekdays. We arrived at 3:50 and were rushing about trying to see as much as we could in ten minutes. However, the hostesses told us not to hurry, and they kindly stayed over time to tell us about the exhibits. We promised to send these gracious ladies a copy of the next Tracer.

Alice M. Clark

Director Henry Marlowe spent a month touring England and Scotland. He and his wife made a special trip to visit the town of Marlow in the Thomas valley. They found the historical town very picturesque and the people very friendly and interesting. The Marlowe family has traced their history back to three cousins who came to America in in 1656.

A week was spent touring Scotland and the Lake Country. Mr. Marlowe is always interested in Agriculture as he taught in the Huntley schools twenty years and now operates the Marlowe Feed & Hatchery. He was surprised to see so many old stone fences and houses in these areas.

The Marlowes were visiting their son Lyle and family in London. Lyle is an engineer with Esso Oil Co. The Jubilee decorations and sights of London and Dover were of special interest.

Side trips were made to the Isle of Jersey to visit the War Memorial Hospital and see the area where Jersey cows originated; to Wales, to visit the Folk Museum. The museum was in two parts: a building to display materials of life and culture, an open air section on the environment of the material life. The St. Fayans Castle and land for the museum had been donated to Wales and was also open to the public.

The Marlowes would like to visit the area again - especially when the Heather is in bloom.

Henry Marlowe

In June, George and Gwen Danner vacationed in Kansas. Their primary purpose was to see the grain harvest but continual nightly rains defeated this aim. Since they had already visited Abilene, where one can visit the Eisenhower memorial and museum, the beautiful tomb of the president and the very interesting boyhood home of "Ike", they did not turn south from Route 80 until they were farther west, and their first visit in Kansas was Fort Hays. Here they saw several of the original buildings, the blockhouse, first building on the more than seven thousand acre area of the fort; the guard house; and the commandant's house. These are all filled with the memorabilia of the early days of the Post. The museum itself has glass-topped counters containing miniature replicas of every building that was there, arranged in exactly the order they were in. Outside the foundations of the homes of the non-coms and other married men may be seen, although within some of them trees have grown to a goodly size. Across the road, in a pasture, is a small herd of buffalo. It is almost eighty years since the last great herd stampeded across the land set aside for the Fort.

After spending some days in the High Plains country, and visiting a several thousand acre wheat farm, they again went south, actoss the Smokey River Reservoir with its hazey, Scottish type scenery, to Dodge City. They visited the old frontier town on Wyatt Earp street. Inside is a museum with much for anyone who has ever enjoyed tales of cowboys, Indians, overland coaches, covered wagons and pony express riders. Did you know the average age of these riders was fourteen? They also have one large glass case filled with pictures and memorabilia of "Gunsmoke", Matt Dillon and Kitty Blake. The museum is open to everyone and there is no charge. They do have a fish bowl out to hold any do-

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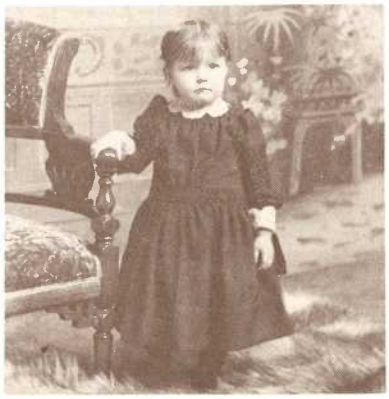
1887



1889

1892

OUR PICTURE STORY

On July eleventh, Winifred Cash Bridges was ninety years old. Her lifetime spans much more than half the period white people have been living in the county. Her great grandparents, the Shubal Smiths, with their six sons, settled in Chemung township in 1840. (The farm is still occupied by members of the family, Mrs. Bridges' daughter and son-in-law, the Ralph Lacys, farming the place, and living in the big house built in 1866, while Mrs. Bridges lives in a smaller house.) Winifred was the only daughter of Edson and Sarah Smith Cash.

1899

Her father was a groceryman when the baby picture was taken but before he was a year old he bought a farm and moved his family to the Lawrence area. Here the little girl and her brother would go to school. She recalls her tenth birthday and the little girls who walked over (some from several miles) to enjoy her party with her that July day in 1897. Lawrence school finished, there were high school days, driving into Harvard. She graduated in 1905, third in the second largest class that school had graduated. After high school, she taught for several years. In 1914, she married Bert Bridges. They bought a farm near her parents and there they lived until 1970 when they moved to the Smith farm to be closer to their daughter. Their first child, a son, Edson, whose birth had completed four living generations, gave his life in World War II. All her years have been devoted to her family, her church, and her community. Now widowed, she is still active in all these areas.

1914
MARRIAGE TO BERT BRIDGES

90TH BIRTHDAY PARTY - 1977

1947

FOUR GENERATIONS: CAROLINE SMITH, WINIFRED BRIDGES, EDSON BRIDGES AND SARAH CASH - 1918

WITH SON EDSON - 1922

nations people wish to give, with a volunteer in charge, who said they always start each period with a "teaser". The Danners wondered afterward if the five dollar bill -- they saw only the one--wasn't the teaser for that session!

At Dodge, they also visited Boot Hill (where the people who were hung are not buried with those who were shot, or came to their death in some other fashion) and the Boot Hill Museum, where one entire wall is covered with buffalo guns from the Henrys and Sharps down to modern day rifles.

Both at Boot Hill and the Frontier village, although they are "not for profit" they were doing a thriving business in souvenirs. The wax museum had a substantial ticket price and also sold souvenirs. (This is where they have Presidents Kennedy and Johnson on exhibition along with the old-time gun slingers.) At the Long Branch, you could step right up to the bar for sarsaparilla under the pictured eyes of the lady who did once own the place. Her name was Caroline.

At the Coronado House on another street is the spot where the first Christian service was held in what is now the United States by Coronado's chaplain some 400 years ago.

After leaving Dodge City, they turned east on the Santa Fe trail, crossing the Arkansas River lowland, the Flint Hills and the Osage Cuestas on their way to Shawnee, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri where they visited before going up to Des Moines, Iowa where they spent several hours at the Living Farms which are active, working examples of the way people lived in Iowa, from the first farmers in the 1840's with their log buildings, oxen, poorer grain and animals, through the mansion and barn of the 1876 era, the 1900s up to today's farm with its big tractors, trucks and pure bred stock.

A most interesting trip. Gwen Danner

OBITUARY

The gentleman we write about today will be missed at the museum, although he has not been a McHenry County resident since 1921, when he moved to Roselle Illinois. Earl M. Crandall has retained his interest in his boyhood home, (he was born in Union in September, 1884) and was always willing to delve into his memory for needed facts and then willing to sit down and put them on paper. The museum was indebted to him for much information about the Union school, now the Museum building, and the first telephones in the area.

He is survived by his wife, one of our senior members also. They were married seventy-three years ago last January. There are two sons and two daughters, eight grandchildren and twenty-one grand-children. Mr. Crandall had been active in church, civic affairs and lodge duties. So a full life comes to an end, but leaves a shining example.

ODDS 'N' ENDS

From an 1865 newspaper: " How long did Cain hate his brother?" "As long as he was Abel."

Did you know: Long before Union had rides available for short distances on cars, Harvard had a miniature train, built by George Shephard, which proceeded east on University street, pulled by a small edition steam engine. This was in 1905.

Did you know: In the early days of its history, Algonquin had a school teacher, a Miss Phoebe Dunn, who weighed five hundred pounds? Besides teaching, she traveled with Ringling Bros. circus. She died in 1870. A gentleman from the same town was also with the circus and billed as a giant because he was seven feet tall.

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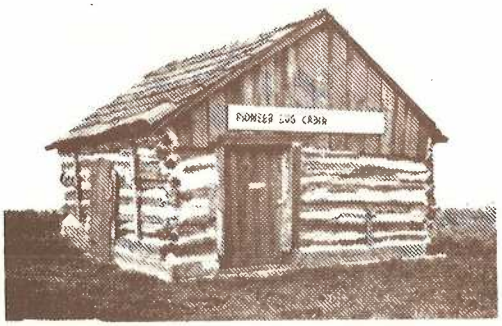

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